

David Chavez, Jr.

New Mexican Soldier, Judge, Census Clerk

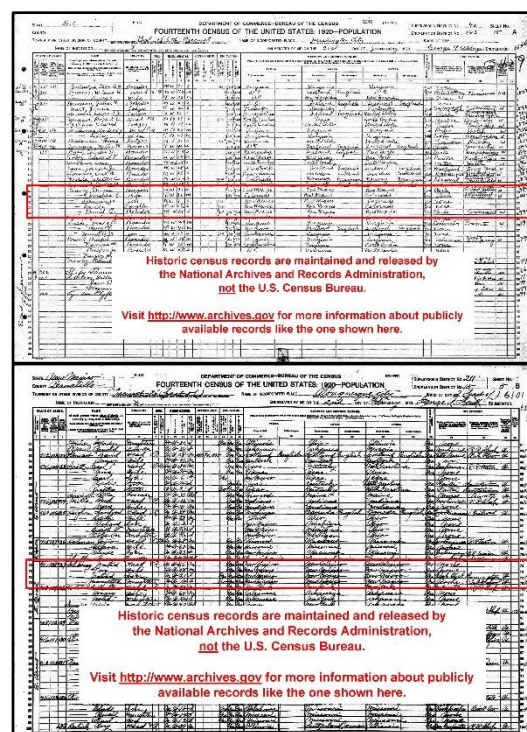


El Nuevo Mexicano (Santa Fe, NM)
3 November 1932

The U.S. Census Bureau continually strives to ensure an accurate count of the people of the United States. For this reason, it has always embraced the hiring of a diverse workforce representative of the local communities. In the middle of the 19th century, the United States expanded west into areas formerly governed by Spain and Mexico. Since many of the citizens and local officials only spoke Spanish, the Census Office quickly realized that it needed to employ workers fluent in the language. The establishment of a permanent Census Bureau in 1903 and increased immigration from Cuba and Central and South America expanded the need for Spanish-speaking employees both in the field and at headquarters.

David Chavez, Jr., was born on November 12, 1897, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. His father worked in a foundry, while his mother, Paz, kept house and looked

after him and his six siblings. David attended Albuquerque public schools, where he played football and basketball. After spending one year at the University of New Mexico, David enlisted in the United States Army in March 1918. After his discharge from the Army in February 1919, David made his way to Washington, DC, where he enrolled in Georgetown University. While working towards his law degree, the Census Bureau employed David as a clerk for the 1920 census of Bernalillo County, which included his hometown of Albuquerque. David worked with the Census Bureau until 1922, when he graduated from Georgetown.



David's 1920 censuses from DC and New Mexico



The Washington Evening Star
(Washington, DC) 18 June 1929

In 1920, David showed up on two different census schedules—that of his parents in New Mexico and that of the boarding house where he lived in Washington. Often when a person left home for work or school, these moves were viewed as temporary and families would include that person in their family enumerations. The person was then counted a second time at their current residence. Several presidents, including James Madison, Martin Van Buren, William McKinley, and Theodore Roosevelt, as well as Charles Lindbergh have been counted twice in a census. Fortunately, this did not occur enough to change census results and technology has reduced the possibility even further.



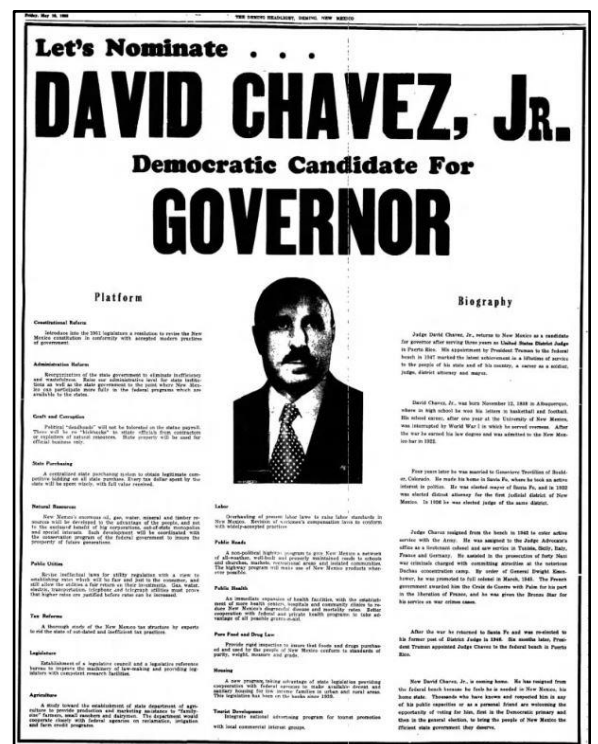
1942, David received a commission as major and served in the Army's Judge Advocate General Corps (JAG). He worked in the administration of American occupied areas of Europe and participated in the prosecution of 40 Dachau concentration camp guards. In March 1945, David received a promotion to colonel. For his service, he earned the Croix de Guerre with palm and the Bronze Star Medal.

In 1946, David received an honorable discharge and returned to Santa Fe and his previous position as judge, to which he had won re-election. However, David's time in New Mexico did not last long. In 1947, President Harry S. Truman appointed David a federal district judge in Puerto Rico. After 3 years in Puerto Rico, David resigned his place on the bench and returned to New Mexico in 1950 to run in the gubernatorial election, where he placed second in the Democratic primaries.



After finalizing the 1920 census data, David's term ended in 1922 and he returned to New Mexico. Now a law school graduate, David passed the bar exam and settled in Santa Fe to practice law. In 1925, he served as district attorney. That same year David married Genevieve Trovillion from Boulder, Colorado. David's political star continued to rise and in 1932 the citizens of Santa Fe elected David as mayor. He then served as district attorney and then won election as judge for the 1st District Court of New Mexico. David's older brother, Dennis, was experiencing similar political success at this time. First elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1931, he then won election to the U.S. Senate in 1935, where he served until his death in 1962.

David had joined the New Mexico National Guard following WWI, and as World War II engulfed the nation and the world, he put his judgeship on hold and entered active service. In



The Deming Headlight (Deming, NM), 19 May 1950

David resumed working as an attorney and continued his community contributions with organizations like the Lions Club, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Sierra Club, and others. In 1959, David received an appointment to the New Mexican Supreme Court. In the following year the people of New Mexico elected him to that position for an 8-year term. In 1967, he became chief justice, where he remained until his retirement from public service in 1969. David continued to work as a lawyer until his death in Las Vegas, New Mexico, on November 3, 1984. His only child, Caroline, survived him.

The Census Bureau is grateful for David's service and contributions to our mission.